



One of the best ways to make eating healthy easier is to have a **PLAN**.

- P** – Prepare portable foods at home.
- L** – Limit fats, salt and sugars.
- A** – Add vegetables and fruits to every meal.
- N** – Nutrient rich foods over fast food.

By having a **PLAN** that provides you with a mix of protein, high fiber carbs and healthy fats, you can maximize energy, stabilize mood, minimize hunger and prevent blood-sugar peaks and valleys.

Planning healthy meals can be quick and easy.



When planning your meals, here are some tips to keep in mind:

Eat lots of small meals

- Eat every three to four hours. Your body works hard to digest and absorb the food it eats, and your metabolism revs up in response.
- Bring healthy snacks such as nuts, yogurt, peanut butter and fruit for the day.

Eat breakfast

- It will jumpstart your metabolism.
- Include: protein, such as eggs, nuts or beans.
- Have breakfast within two hours of waking.

Nix late night eating

- Your metabolism is slowest in the evening, so don't overeat then. Give your body at least three hours before bedtime to digest.
- Eating early in the evening will help you sleep better too.

Protein is your friend

- Eating protein boosts your metabolism.
- Eating enough protein will help you maintain and build muscle mass.
- Good sources of low-fat protein include lean meats, turkey breast, skinless chicken breast, fish, cottage cheese, low-fat yogurt, tofu and beans.

Say yes to:

- Whole grains.
- Choose whole-grain carbohydrates instead of refined. That means oatmeal, brown rice, whole-wheat bread, barley, sweet potatoes, whole-wheat pasta, beans, etc.
- Healthy fats, such as avocados, olive oil, nuts and seeds, natural peanut butter, ground flax seeds and fatty fish.
- Fruits and veggies.

Try to avoid:

- Fried foods.
- Sugar.
- High Sodium.
- Processed foods.

The 80/20 Rule

Make 80 percent of your meals healthy ones made of protein and the "say yes" foods. Twenty percent of your meals can be less healthy but don't eat more of the unhealthy food in one sitting than you usually would just because you are eating unhealthy foods less often.



PLAN AHEAD: EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY BROWN BAG LUNCHES

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Shopping List
Chef Salad 1/2 bag green salad 2 med tomatoes (sliced) 4 slices of bell pepper 1/2 cucumber (sliced) 1 cup cubed low salt ham 3 slices turkey bacon crumbled 1 hardboiled egg (chopped) 1 sliced carrot shredded cheddar cheese choice of low fat salad dressing whole wheat saltines ----- banana	Fajita Chicken Salad 1/2 bag shredded romaine lettuce 1 Tomato (chopped) 1 jalapeño (chopped) 1/2 purple onion (sliced) 1 small can black olives Taco sauce 1 cup low fat 12 oz. grilled chicken 1 small bag baked corn tortilla chips ----- apple	Roast Beef Pita Shredded Roast Beef whole wheat pita shredded lettuce 1 medium tomato (sliced) 2 slices purple onion 1 slice low fat cheese low-fat mayo or choice of low fat salad dressing ----- 1 cup fresh blueberries	Ham and Cheese Hoagie 1 whole wheat hoagie deli sliced low salt ham 2 slices low fat cheese low-fat mayonnaise shredded lettuce 1 medium tomato (sliced) ----- orange	Turkey Ranch Wrap whole wheat wrap deli-sliced low salt turkey low-fat ranch dressing shredded lettuce 1 med tomato (sliced) ----- red grapes	1 pkg whole wheat saltines 1 pkg whole wheat wraps 1 small bag baked chips 1 pkg whole wheat hoagies 1 pkg whole wheat pitas 5 med. Tomatoes 3 bags shredded lettuce 1 jalapeño 1 bell pepper 1 purple onion 1 boiled egg 1 pkg. carrots 1 sm. can sliced black olives 1 bottle low-fat salad dressing/ low-fat mayo 1 jar taco sauce 2 pkgs shredded low fat cheese 1 lb low salt deli-sliced turkey 1 pkg low salt deli-sliced ham 1 pkg grilled chicken or grill your own 1 pkg turkey bacon 1 pkg shredded roast beef 1 banana 1 apple 1 orange red grapes blueberries

Other helpful tools for meal planning

Sample healthy eating plan—Myplate:
www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/sample-menus-recipes.html

Ways to add more fruits and vegetables to your diet:
www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsandvegetables/index.html

Meal planning for those with or at risk for diabetes:
http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/M mealPlanner/en_intro_hm

Meal planning for those with high blood pressure:
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf